MIRACLE METHODS

CASTING NEW LIGHT
ON THE STRIPPER DECK

by

JEAN HUGARD

and

FRED BRAUE

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PRIVATELY PUBLISHED

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ORIGINAL
IDEAS

MIRACLE METHODS

CASTING NEW LIGHT ON THE STRIPPER DECK

A Treatise on the Science and Art of Manipulating Biseaute Cards

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JEAN HUGARD

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FRED BRAUE

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Embracing entirely new and original methods of handling stripper cards and performing tricks therewith, and bringing the most brilliant card feats within the reach of every performer without the use of sleight of hand.

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INTRODUCTION

The prepared pack of cards, commonly known in America as a *stripper* pack, is one of the oldest devices of card magic. Essentially the pack is ons the sides of which have been tapered, the deck being thus infinitesimally wedge-shaped at one end. It is obvious that, if a single card or a number of cards be reversed in such a deck, these cards will be found at will, since the wide end of the reversed cards can be felt at the narrow end of the pack.

It is a curious fact that the stripper pack has not been highly regarded by the conjuring fraternity, which for the most part has thought of it as a plaything of novices. This may be accounted for in great part, through its neglect at the hands of magical writers. The earliest mention that we have been able to find is by Guyot in his book *Nouvelles Recreations Physiques et Mathematiques,* published at Paris in 1769. He describes two tricks only, the discovery of a chosen card by the reversal of the deck and the stripping apart of the two colors at a single stroke. Subsequent writers have, for the most part, simply repeated these two tricks. This paucity of information as to the possible uses of the principle and the inferior quality of the stripper packs presently on the market, these cards being cut so strongly wedge-shaped as to invite detection by observant onlookers, have no doubt contributed to the disdain shown by magicians for this ingenious instrument of deception. Yet, as the reader will come to understand after perusing this book, some of the most brilliant of card effects are made possible with this deck, effects which have resulted from the discovery and application of new and ingenious principles.

Many of these principles and tricks are evolvements of the authors, separately and jointly, and never before have appeared in print, having been reserved for their private use. Some of these, of which the authors are immodestly proud, have been marked with a brand —H-B—, and the authors can only ask the reader to indulge them in their vanity, since they feel that this book cuts cleanly into new lands never before explored. In sharing these and other feats with the fraternity, it is their hope that the despised stripper deck will come to be regarded with the respect to which it is entitled.

PREPARING THE STRIPPER DECK

In preforming the feats described in this book, the reader should use a deck the sides of which have been stripped extremely finely; cards which have been cut coarsely may be acceptable for platform work, but for intimate trickery a delicate strip is essential. With such a deck a card may be reversed and the deck handed to a spectator without fear that he will discover the subterfuge; indeed, it is only after a certain amount of experiment that the conjurer himself will learn the technique necessary for the location and control of reversed cards.

Packs as finely stripped as these are difficult to obtain and for this reason the authors' method of preparing the deck is given herewith: First of all, take two playing cards and of these make two templates for use in preparing the deck. From a side of each card trim, with sharp scissors or razor-blade, a tiny triangular strip running nearly the length of the card. Upon each card mount a strip of cigarbox wood slightly

smaller than the surface of the playing card, using a good glue or rubber cement. Finally, secure a fine-toothed wood file.

Place the templates at the top and bottom of a pack of cards of good quality. Insert the pack and templates in a vise (or, if you prefer it, secure two small hand-vises and clamp one at each end of the pack and templates.) Using the file, file the sides of the pack briskly until it is cut to the depth of the guiding template. Be careful to file at right angles to the side of the pack, lest certain of the cards be wider than others, if only by the fraction of an inch. After the side of the deck has been cut to the approximate requirement, remove the pack and the template and riffle the ends of the pack, when a fine white powder will be blown from it. Shuffle the cards, being careful not to reverse any of them, and once again place the pack between the templates and insert it in the vise. Again score the side of the pack with the file; thus, if the original filing was not made at a perfect right angle, this second filing will compensate for the original error by reducing any cards which may be higher than others. Repeat the procedure if necessary.

The side thus filed should be reduced for less than a thirty-second of an inch at the narrow end—as finely as the reader finds, in his experience, a pack may be cut and still enable him to control the reversed cards.

If desired the other side of the pack may be filed, thus making of the deck a standard stripper pack. The authors, however, have found that a stripper pack, one side alone of which has been stripped, is eminently satisfactory, fulfilling all the functions of the usual wedge-shaped deck.

End strippers—cards the ends of which have been cut wedge-shaped—are made in the same manner.

A. MECHANICS

The Stripper Grip

The method of gripping a stripper deck to be described hereunder is of special significance since it makes possible the system of manipulation explained in this book.

1. Grasp the pack in the left hand, palm upwards, with the thumb at one side near the left hand corner, the first finger curled at the outer end, and the second finger at the other side near the right outer corner. The third and fourth fingers play no part in the grip.

2. Hold the deck low in the left hand so that its sides press against the thumb at the joint and against the second finger at the middle joint.

The position is almost idencical with that taken by the left hand in the familiar Hindu shuffle.

The Hugard-Braue Strip Shuffle

This method is the best yet devised for controlling a card or cards reversed in the deck. Here is the method:

N.B. It should be noted particularly that in the text which follows the word *reverse* means in all cases the turning of a card end for end. When a card or cards are to be turned *face upwards* it will be so stated.

1. Hold the pack in your left hand in the *Stripper Grip* with the narrow end outwards.

2. Grasp the inner end of the pack between the extreme tips of the right thumb and second finger, draw out the lower half of the pack and allow the packet remaining in the left hand to drop onto the left palm. If the reversed card was in the packet thus drawn out it will have been retained by the pressure of the left thumb and second finger and will, therefore, become the bottom card of the packet just dropped onto the left palm. Immediately execute an end running cut with the packet in the right hand.

3. If the desired card has not been drawn out by this first action, it must now be in the lower half of the deck and you have only to repeat the movements to ensure bringing the card to the bottom of the pack.

The same process holds good when there are several cards reversed in the pack. The first shuffle will bring the reversed card or cards in the lower half to the bottom and the repetition of the movements will strip out the remaining card or cards on top of the first. The shuffle may be repeated any number of times to guard against mischance and to guarantee that all the reversed cards are taken to the bottom, those reversed cards already on the bottom remaining there during such subsequent shuffles.

If it is desired to take a reversed card or cards to the top, make the shuffle with the pack face upwards, under the pretext that you wish those present to see for themselves how well the cards are mixed; or, if you have an objection to shufflling with the cards face upwards, take the reversed cards at the bottom to the top by means of an overhand shuffle.

This new procedure is perhaps the easiest and most deceptive method of controlling cards in a stripper deck and, as the reader will determine for himself, opens up a new and exciting field in practical card work.

Reversing the Pack for the Return of a Chosen Card

FIRST METHOD. 1. Hold the pack in the left hand, with the right hand spread the cards from left to right in a wide fan and have a spectator remove one.

2 Close the fan of cards by placing the fingers of the right hand against its left side, moving the right hand around to the right and squaring the pack against the left palm. This action turns the pack end for end in a perfectly natural way.

To prevent a spectator from accidentally turning his chosen card end for end, thus nullifying the reversal of the pack, a casual request that he hold it close to his chest to prevent any possibility of its being glimpsed, generally serves to prevent such a contretemps. However, should you note that the spectator has reversed his card, fan the deck a second time and again reverse it, as given above, in closing the fan of cards as if merely toying with the deck while you impress on him the necessity of remembering his card.

SECOND METHOD. 1. Spread the cards in the left hand in a wide fan with the right hand in the usual way for the selection of a card.

2. A card having been taken, close the fan of cards by placing the right forefinger against the right side of the spread, moving the hand around to the left and so bringing the pack back to its original position.

3. Seize the pack with the right hand by its ends, the thumb at the inner end, the fingers at the outer end, and move the hand towards the right, at the same time turning it, back downwards, and bringing the pack face upwards.

4. Retake the pack in the left hand by placing the left fingers on its face and the thumb on its back, the back of the left hand being uppermost. Turn the left hand to hold the pack as for dealing and the pack, automatically, will have been turned end for end.

The subtle action of the right hand in taking the pack should appear to be a mere gesture accompanying some remark to the spectator.

THIRD METHOD. 1. Spread the cards in the usual way between the hands and have a card freely selected.

2. Square the pack and hold it by the ends with both hands, thumbs on the top, fingers on the face. When the spectator has noted his card and is ready to return it, remove the left hand and spread the cards fanwise with the right hand. Hold them out towards the spectator and have the chosen card pushed into the spread.

3. If by chance, or purposely, the spectator reverses his card, you have simply to release your right hand and spread the cards with the left.

For this method it is not necessary to make a perfect fan with one hand. Whichever hand it is necessary to use, the pack is in the correct position and, by pressing the thumb one way and the fingers the other way, it is an easy matter to spread the cards sufficiently.

FOURTH METHOD. 1. Spread the pack and have a spectator freely select a card.

2. Immediately hand the pack to a second spectator, have him spread the cards and the first spectator replace his card amongst them.

The action of handing the pack to the second spectator reverses it.

TO REVERSE A PACKET OF CARDS. Several effective tricks with a stripper deck depend upon having a packet of cards, generally of a known number, reversed in the pack. In cases where this cannot be done beforehand, this procedure can be followed:

1. Riffle off the required number of cards with the left thumb and transfer the break to the left little finger (*Expert Card Technique. page* 125.)

2. Palm the packet in the right hand and hold the pack by the ends in that hand between the thumb at the inner end and the first and second fingers at the outer end.

3. Turn the right hand to bring the thumb uppermost and the pack on end, take the pack with the left hand by the sides and turn the left hand palm upwards, so that the pack lies on its side on the fingers, the thumb being on the upper side. Tap the inner ends of the cards with the backs of the right fingers, squaring them.

4. Retake the pack with the right hand, adding the packet, now reversed, to the top.

As with many sleights, this action should be made while talking of other things in an apparent interlude between tricks; it should not be thought of as a sleight in the strict sense of the word. It is merely something which is done unnoticed while toying with the cards.

To Reverse a Single Card for Use as a Key Card

a. 1. In toying with the pack, push off the top card with the left thumb; grasp it at its inner right corner between the right thumb above, and the first finger below, at its face.

2. Turn the card face upwards, end over end. Rest its left side against the right side of the deck and flip the card face downwards, sidewise, reversing it.

The action should be made without looking at the pack, as being a mere idle gesture. It can be repeated several times, it being necessary only to complete the action on an odd number.

b. To reverse a card without exposing its face to the spectators, follow this procedure:

1. Push the top card off the pack with the left thumb and take it with the right hand, the thumb on its face and the fingers on the back.

2. Turn the card face upwards, end for end, and then face downwards, sidewise, by releasing the thumb and pressing downwards with the fingers on the back. The back of the card is towards the audience at all times.

A REVERSE CARD AS A KEY CARD. This useful stratagem should be used occasionally to throw the spectators completely off the scent since, however subtly the pack may be reversed, the fact remains that certain movements are made before the return of a chosen card. By using a reversed card as a key, the pack remains in exactly the same position before and after the card is taken. All that is necessary is to reverse one card and this can be done in toying with the pack, as explained above, and you do not have to know what this card is. The stratagem is used thus:

1. With a single card reversed in the deck, hand it to be shuffled. Take it back and allow a spectator to make a free choice of a card and note what it is. As he does this, control the reversed card to the bottom of the pack. Undercut about half the cards and have the spectator place his card on the top of the packet in your left hand. Drop the cut on top, thus bringing the reversed card immediately above the chosen card.

2. Square the pack very openly and lay it on the table for a moment while you rub your hands together or pull your cuffs back a little, making some appropriate remark to the spectator at the time. To find the card later, you have merely to jog the reversed card and cut it to the bottom, thus bringing the selected card to the top.

It is unlikely that a short overhand shuffle will separate the two cards and you can, if you please, hand the pack to the spectator to be shuffled before you make the cut. However, the procedure given above is so convincing that there is little to be gained by having a spectator shuffle the pack except when a direct challenge is made. In that case, after pretended demur, hand the pack over, but take it back after a few shuffling motions have been made, with a jocular remark, such as. "Oh, I don't want you to shuffle all the spots off the cards."

Another good method is to use the *Stripper Force* to place a reversed card under a chosen card. In this case, an obviously honest running cut is made until the moment before the chosen card is dropped into the pack, at which time the bottom reversed card is stripped onto the top of the left hand packet, the spectator thus placing his card

on top of the key card. A *Stripper Under-cut* will then send the selected card to the bottom of the pack, as explained below.

THE HUGARD-BRAUE CUT CONTROL. A single card having been reversed in the deck to act as a key card, it is desired to bring that card to the bottom.

1. Hold the pack in the left hand, face downwards, the narrow end outermost, between the ball of the thumb at the side and as near as possible to the outer left corner, and the top joints of the second and third fingers on the opposite side, near the outer right corner, the first finger curled under the pack and the fourth finger free.

2. Bring the right hand over the pack, the thumb at the inner end, the fingers at the outer end, and at the same moment press the ball of the left thumb lightly against the protruding side of the reversed card, relaxing its pressure on the cards below, thus allowing them to fall onto the left palm.

3. Immediately grip the upper packet with the right hand, lift it as in making a regular cut and slide it below the packet in the left palm.

The action is similar to that in which the pack is split at a bridge, or a face-up card, prior to making the Charlier pass. If the reversed card happens to have been left by the shuffle near the top or the bottom, make a regular cut first to bring it near the middle, then make a second cut as explained.

SIGHTING THE CARD AT THE BOTTOM. We will suppose that you have a chosen card reversed in the deck and you wish to sight it before revealing it:

1. Control the reversed card to the bottom of the pack by means of the *H-B Strip Shuffle.*

2. Draw out the bottom half with the right thumb and fingers and make a running cut exactly as in making the Hindu shuffle, that is, draw cards from the top of the right hand packet with the left thumb and fingers, allowing them to drop upon the cards retained in the left hand.

3. Turn a little to the left and tilt the packet in your right hand upwards, so that its bottom card faces you, and with it tap the inner ends of the cards in the left hand as if merely to square them; the two packets coming together at right angles.

The card to be sighted is thus brought into your view without arousing any suspicion since it is natural to look at the cards as you tap them square.

H-B FALSE STRIP SHUFFLE. 1. Hold the deck in the *Stripper Grip* and undercut a little more than half of it with the right thumb and second finger. Drop these cards on the top of the pack so that they project about an inch over the inner end of the lower packet.

2. Grasp the sides of the upper packet between the left little finger and thumb and, with the right second finger and thumb, withdraw the lower half of the cards of the projecting upper packet. Drop this packet on top, its outer end flush with that of the bottom packet.

3. As you do this, grasp the middle packet, which now projects from the inner end of the pack, between the right thumb and the third finger, draw it away from the pack and drop it on top. Repeat the moves several times rapidly.

Apparently the cards have been mixed; actually they have merely been cut, otherwise they retain their original order. For those who use the *Strip Shuffle* or the

Hindu Shuffle habitually, this false shuffle, smoothly and rapidly performed a number of times, will serve to convince those who watch that the cards are in reality well mixed.

With a slight modification this shuffle can be used to keep a prearranged deck in its exact order. In such case, in drawing out the middle packet, as in item 3 above, insert the tip of the left little finger above the bottom packet and, as a final movement, draw out this bottom packet with the right thumb and second finger and drop it on top. The whole pack will then have been returned to its original order.

TO CONTROL TWO OR MORE CARDS. We will suppose that you wish to demonstrate how gamblers control a number of cards, using the four aces for this purpose. The following procedure will show how a number of cards can be controlled when a stripper deck is in use.

1. Turn the pack free upwards, run through the cards and push the aces upwards, one by one, as you come to them, making them protrude from the pack for half their length.

2. Turn the pack face downwards in your left hand and with the right hand take the protruding aces by their outer ends, withdraw them from the pack and throw them onto the table face upwards, turning them end for end in the action.

3. Run through the cards rapidly with their faces towards the spectators to show that there are no other aces amongs them, square the pack and spread it in a wide fan in your left hand.

4. Turn the aces face downwards, sidewise, take them by their outer ends one by one and push them into the fan in different places, well apart, allowing about half their length to protrude. The aces have been, thus inperceptibly reversed.

5. Close the fan of cards, rest the lower end of the deck on the table and with the right hand pat the aces downwards until they are flush with the other cards. Do this very openly so that there can be no mistake about the aces being lost in the pack, then make an overhand shuffle.

6. Jog all four aces at the inner end of the pack in exactly the same way as explained below for one reversed card.

7. This action leaves the pack in the right hand, held by its narrow end, the back of the hand outermost, the little finger resting against, and concealing the jogged cards, the forefinger, extended, resting on the back of the top card. Bring the left hand over the pack, palm downwards, and take hold of its outer corners between the thumb and third finger, the first and second fingers resting on the side and taking no part in the grip. Draw the right hand away smartly to the right, stripping out the four jogged aces and dropping them face downwards, the action simulating the first move in a running out.

8. Immediately continue taking small packets of cards from the top and dropping them onto the aces until the pack is exhausted. Pick up the pack and square it; the aces are now on the bottom.

The aces can be brought to the top of the pack by an overhand shuffle and turned face upwards one by one, or a more effective finish would be this:

1. Bring the aces to the top, turn your left side to the spectators and take the pack with the right hand by the ends between the thumb and fingers, holding it face outwards, vertically on its side.

2. Bring the left hand over, palm upwards, and rest the lower side of the pack on the fingers, the thumb resting on the outer top corner. With the left thumb separate about a quarter of the deck near the bottom, press the tips of the left fingers against the rear card, that is, the top card of the pack and first ace, and lift away the remaining cards above the break with the right hand. The first ace is thus slipped on top of the packet in the left hand and you drop that packet face downwards on the table.

3. Repeat exactly the same action with another quarter of the deck, slipping the second ace on top of it, and drop the packet beside the first. Divide the remainder of the pack in half, repeat the slip and drop the packet with the others. Throw the last packet, which has the fourth ace on top, beside the outer three.

4. Finally turn the top cards of the packets face upwards and reveal the four aces.

THE STRIPPER JOG CONTROL. With a single card reversed in the deck, here is the method of controlling it by means of the jog.

1. After shuffling the pack overhand with the wide end outwards, take it in the left hand in the *Stripper Grip*. Square the ends of the pack with the right thumb and fingers.

2. Take hold of the narrow end with the right hand, the thumb at the upper side, the second and third fingers at the lower side, and move the right thumb and fingers inward about an eighth of an inch before actually gripping the inner corners. This action will jog the reversed card at the inner end of the deck.

3. Lift the pack with the right hand and tap its lower side on the palm of the left hand, squaring the sides.

4. Place the pack face downwards in the left hand in dealing position, cut at the jogged card and complete the cut, thus bringing the reversed card to the bottom of the pack.

In making the cut, press the right fingers downwards on the outer end of the pack to prevent the thumb pushing the jogged card inwards, then with the right thumb lift the jogged card and the cards above it upwards, slip the tip of the left little finger into the break, push the jogged card flush and make the cut. This action takes but an instant and ensures a clean cut, otherwise the outer end of the jogged card has tendency to drop.

With very fine strippers it is extremely important that the left hand holds the cards very lightly, so lightly in fact that the cards wil move a little apart at their inner ends. To bring the card to the top you have simply to make the cut above the jogged card.

THE H-B STRIPPER FORCE. We will suppose that you wish to force the six of diamonds and that you have reversed that card in the deck. Hand the deck to be shuffled by a spectator, indicating an overhand shuffle; then—

1. Take the pack back, control the reversed card to the bottom and hold the pack with the narrow end outwards.

2. Undercut a little more than half the deck with the right hand and proceed at once to do a *Strip Shuffle*, inviting the spectator to call *Stop* whenever he wishes. Hold the inner ends of the right hand packet tightly and, in taking the successive small packets from its top with the left thumb and second finger tips, grip them lightly in order to avoid any premature seizure of the reversed six of diamonds at the bottom of this packet.

3. When the spectator calls *Stop,* make a last action with the right hand, strip out the reversed six of diamonds from the bottom of the packet by engaging it with the sides of the left thumb and second finger and let it fall on top of the cards in the left hand. Immediately extend the left hand towards him inviting him to take the card he stopped you at, the six of diamonds in this case.

The action is easy, deceptive and convincing. The spectator, having shuffled the pack himself, is satisfied you cannot know the position of any particular card in the pack and, therefore, it appears to make no difference what card is stopped at.

THE STRIPPER UNDERCUT. By means of this sleight a reversed card is brought to the top of the pack by what appears to be a perfectly regular undercut. A single card being reversed in the pack, to bring it to the top, proceed as follows:

1. Hold the pack in the left hand in the *Stripper Grip.*

2. Seize the inner end of the deck between the right thumb and second finger, the forefinger resting on the back of the top card.

3. Feel the protruding sides of the reversed card with the right thumb and second finger, press downwards lightly, separating that card and all the cards below it from the other cards above it. Draw out the packet thus separated and slap it down on top of the remainder of the deck.

The undercut is now in such general use that the action appears perfectly regular and the reversed card is brought to the top naturally.

THE STRIPPER RUNNING CUT. A single reversed card being in the deck, it is desired to bring that card to the top of the pack in the course of a running out. Here is the process:

1. Hold the pack in the left hand in the *Stripper Grip,* the narrow end outwards.

2. With the tips of the right thumb and second finger slide a small packet of cards inwards from the top of the pack, taking it by the inner corners, and drop it face downwards on the table.

3. Repeat the action until eventually you take hold of a packet in which the reversed card lies. In drawing this packet away the reversed card will be held back by the left thumb and fingers pressing against its wide end.

4. Drop this last card on top of the other cards on the table and immediately let all the cards remaining in the left hand drop onto the left palm, thus preventing anyone noticing the space between the reversed card, which is held back, and the packet below it.

5. Take all the cards remaining in the left hannd and drop them on top of the cards on the table. The reversed card will be the top card having been brought there by what appears to be a regular running cut.

If the reversed card is reached in the first two or three cuts, take no notice of it and continue the cuts throughout the deck in regular fashion. Then repeat the action and, this time, when the card is stripped out, it will be at the top of the last small packet which you then drop on top of the cards on the table. Be careful not to look at your hands during the action, just keep talking.

THE STRIPPER GLIDE. With the stripper pack this very useful sleight can be executed in a most convincing way. Let us suppose that you have controlled a chosen card to the top of the pack.

1. Make an overhand shuffle by first pulling out all the cards except those at the top and bottom, then shuffle off freely onto these two cards.

2. Take the pack face downwards with the left hand, the narrow end innermost, the thumb on the middle of one side, the fingers on the other, the tips of the fingers protruding straight down below the deck. Lift the pack to a vertical position to show the bottom card, then turn it downwards to a horizontal position about two inches above the table.

3. With the right hand, palm downwards, take hold of the outer wide corners of the pack between the thumb and second finger and draw the pack outwards about half an inch. This action accompanies the statement that you are about to deal from the bottom and appears to be made to bring the cards into a better position for this purpose. The pressure of the left thumb and fingers, however, on the wide end of the reversed card holds it back and causes it to protrude from the inner end about half an inch. This projection is covered by the left little finger and a side view of the pack can be given showing that the left fingers do not touch the face of the bottom card.

4. Make the deal from the bottom very openly, taking the cards from the extreme edge of the outer card, turning the first card face upwards, and taking the following cards with absolutely no movement of the left fingers.

5. When the time comes to draw out the reversed card, push it flush at the back with the left little finger and take it with the right hand in exactly the same manner as the other cards.

This method of making the glide is so subtle that even those who are well acquainted with the regular sleight will have no suspicion that it is being used.

THE H-B STRIPPER CHANGE. This change, which is applicable to strippers only is very easy to do and is perfectly illusive. Useful in many tricks, especially *The Ambitious Card,* it is executed as follows:

1. After the usual preliminaries, bring the reversed card to the top of the pack, which you hold in your left hand with the narrow end innermost in the *Stripper Grip.*

2. Remove any indifferent card from the pack, show it and place it on the top, being careful not to reverse this card in the action.

3. Place the right thumb at one side of the inner end of the deck, the second finger at the other side and the straight forefinger on the back of the top card, its tip resting near the outer end.

4. Apparently remove the top card with the right hand, but actually strip out the second card, the thumb and second finger gripping its wide end, the top card being retained by the pressure of the left thumb and second finger on its wide end, which corresponds with the wide ends of the other cards of the deck. The position of the right first finger remain the same so that it presses against the back of the reversed card after this has been stripped out, enhancing the illusion of taking the top card. In actual practice, when doing a trick, you shuffle the reversed card to the second place from the top, turn the top card to show it, turn it down and then, executing the change, apparently place it on the table.

THE STRIPPER CUT. Let us say that you have a stock of twelve cards reversed together in the pack and that it is your desire to bring this stock to the top. The procedure is this:

1. Hold the pack in the *Stripper Grip* in the left hand, the wide end being grasped by the left fingers and the wide end of the reversed packet being thus at the inner end.

2. Place the right thumb flat against one side of the narrow end of the deck, the right second and third fingers at the other side, and curl the first finger at the top.

3. Move the right hand inwards on the same plane as the top of the pack, drawing with it, grasped by the fingers and thumb, the reversed packet. This packet slides out of the pack in the same plane as its surface and is not *lifted* out.

4. Immediately, and in the same action, drop the remainder of the pack into the left palm by opening the left fingers, and place the packet just stripped out on the top.

It should be noted particularly that this strip cutting of a packet of reversed cards is equally efficient no matter if the packet is at the top, at the bottom or in the middle of the deck. When cards are stripped from the middle the action is perfectly innocent for then it appears to be the usual cut from the middle, favored by many cardmen.

TRICKS WITH THE STRIPPER DECK

UNFATHOMABLE

This is one of the finest feats possible with a stripper deck. The whole of the action is natural and aboveboard and the keenest observer cannot possibly obtain any clue to the working. In a word—the effect is unfathomable.

EFFECT. After the pack has been shuffled by a spectator, it is cut into two packets about equal. A spectator secretly removes a card from one packet and inserts it in the other packet, squaring both to destroy the slightest possible clue to the action. The two packets are then honestly riffle shuffled, the one into the other, yet the magician locates the selected card and produces it at will.

METHOD. 1. Have the pack shuffled by a spectator. When he is satisfied that the cards are well mixed, take the pack back.

2. Hold the pack in your left hand, face inwards, vertically on its side, the thumb on the upper side, the lower side resting on the fingers below.

3. Cut off half the cards with the right hand thus: Hold the hand palm downwards and take the top half of the pack by the sides near the outer corners between the thumb on the lower side, the first and second fingers on the upper side.

4. Remove this packet and place it face downwards on the table, turning the right hand outwards in the action. At once grasp the remaining packet by its ends, the right thumb at its inner end, the fingers on the outer end, and drop it on the table, beside the first packet and a few inches apart from it. The first packet has thus been imperceptibly turned end for end and any card moved from one packet to the other will be reversed.

5. Turn away and invite a spectator to take any card from one packet, note it and insert it in the other packet.

6. This having been done, turn around, take the packets one in each hand, the thumbs at the inner ends, the fingers at the outer ends, and execute an end riffle shuffle, at the same time calling attention to the fairness of the action. Push the interweaved packets straight into each other and square the pack.

The selected card will be the only card reversed in the deck and it is, therefore, completely under your control, to be revealed in any manner you may desire.

ASTRO-VISION

What can be more intriguing to a magician than to have his victim do all the manipulation necessary to enable him to discover a card secretly chosen? In the trick that follows, not only has the spectator no suspicion that he is aiding the magician, but he is persuaded that he is making the magician's task an impossible one.

METHOD. 1. Hand the pack to a spectator requesting him to shuffle it well and indicating an overhand shuffle.

2. Turn away so that you cannot see what he does and instruct him to deal as many cards as he likes, face downwards, on the table. When he has done this, have him place the next card face upwards on the face-down packet. Request him next to place the remainder of the pack upon the cards on the table, pick up the entire pack and conceal it from your sight by holding it under the table or behind his back.

3. When the cards are hidden, turn around, make any kind of explanation of the feat you propose to perform and glance furtively at the table-top upon which the cards were dealt, as though it were important in the success of the trick. This is a mere window-dressing but because you apparently attach importance to it, so will the spectator in attempting later to explain how the trick was done.

4. Again turn your back and request the spectator to bring forth the pack, spread it from hand to hand, again note his card, which is face upwards, and right it so that it will face the same way as the rest of the pack. In doing this he will turn the card sidewise, whereas in the first instance it was turned end for end. Thus, without in the least realizing it, the spectator has himself reversed his card in the deck.

5. Again have the pack shuffled by the overhand method.

6. The chosen card being the lone reversed card in the deck, it can be controlled by any of the methods previously explained and revealed in a startling fashion.

THE SLOP REVERSE

In this quick and charming feat, a card is chosen and replaced in the pack, which is then mixed in an extremely sloppy, haphazard fashion, some of the cards being placed face upwards and some face downwards. until, to the spectators, the pack is in complete disorder. It is fanned out immediately and the cards are found to be in perfect order, every card being face downwards save one and this one is the chosen card.

METHOD. 1. Spread the pack with its wide end outermost for the selection of a card and, in having it replaced, reverse the pack by one of the methods previously given.

2. Control the chosen card to the bottom by the *H-B Strip Shuffle.*

3. Hold the pack face downwards in the left hand and with the thumb push off a half-dozen cards from the top. Take these by the sides with the right fingers on the face of the cards, the thumb on the back. Turn the right hand over inwards so that its back is uppermost and the packet is face upwards.

4. Push a half-dozen more cards off the pack with the left thumb and take them in the right hand under the face-up cards. Thus you now hold in the right hand, a packet of cards of which half are face upwards, half face downwards.

5. Turn the right hand over, so that its back is lowermost, push off another half-dozen cards from the pack with the left thumb and take them at the bottom of the

packet in the right hand; that is to say, add these cards to the face-down cards at the bottom of the right hand packet.

6. Continue the actions in 3, 4 and 5 until you have exhausted all but the last few cards in the left hand. Contrive to terminate the process with the back of the right hand lowermost and to add all but the bottom card to the bottom of the lower packet. Thus you are left with a single face-down card in the left hand, this being the chosen card. Hold this in the left hand and again turn the right hand with its back uppermost. Place the single card, face downwards, on top of all the other cards.

7. You now hold a pack, the bottom half of which is face downwards and the top half face upwards, the latter having a single face-down card—the chosen card—at the top. However, because of the nature of the action, the bottom half of the pack will have its wide end innermost and the upper half will have its wide end outermost.

8. Hold the pack in the *Stripper Grip* and strip out the lower half with the right hand, holding it by the extreme corners. Let is swing downwards and revolve end for end in the right hand, then slap it down on the cards in the left hand, immediately turning that hand over and placing the pack on the table.

8. Have the chosen card named, utter your magic formula, or use whatever hocus-pocus you prefer, and spread the cards on the table, showing that they are all face downwards with the exception of the chosen card.

9. Remove this card, show it, and in replacing it in the pack turn it down sidewise; the pack will then be in normal condition.

In performing this trick the various actions should be made quickly and as awkwardly as possible—sloppily, in fact, as the title indicates. If this is done it will appear to the spectators that the cards have been hopelessly mixed and the denouement will be a startling surprise.

The use of the stripper pack makes this perhaps the easiest and most deceptive of all reversal tricks. It should be noted particularly that the feat is made almost self-working, there being no need to bridge the deck, or use the half-pass, as in the older methods.

THE BUSTED BOBTAIL

Nowadays every conjurer is expected to be able to deal at will the most miraculous hands in any game and to confess inability to make some such display is to suffer a loss of prestige. The following feat will be found an ideal one for such occasions, since it provides for an apparent failure followed by an astonishing and brilliant recovery. EFFECT. The magician boastfully claims that he can deal a royal flush any time he wants to even though the pack is shuffled and cut between the dealing of each card. Under these conditions he succeeds in dealing four cards of a royal flush of spades, for example. We will suppose that the card required to complete the flush is the ten of spades. The magician shuffles and cuts and—turns up the ten of hearts. After his vainglorious boasting he has dealt a bobtail flush. However, the tables are turned when the four other cards are turned face upwards and prove to complete a royal flush of hearts. METHOD. Beforehand arrange the following cards, QH, QS, AH, AS, JH, JS, KH, KS, 10H, in that order, the QH being the top card of the packet and the 10H the bottom card; reverse the packet and place it on top of the pack. To perform the feat, proceed as follows:

1. Shuffle the pack overhand, not disturbing the order of the nine cards but sending them to the middle.

2. Strip out the stock to the top. Make a double lift, turning the two cards end for end showing the queen of spades. Turn the two cards down sidewise and deal the supposed queen of spades, really the queen of hearts, face downwards on the table.

3. Execute an overhand shuffle as before and strip out the reversed packet to the top; this now consists of seven cards, the queen of spades having been again reversed, automatically joins the rest of the pack. Double lift end for end showing the ace of spades; turn down sidewise and deal the ace of hearts face downwards on the first card.

4. Repeat the same moves to show the jack of spades and the king of spades but really dealing the jack and king of hearts on the other two cards.

5. The ten of hearts is now the only reversed card in the deck. The successful dealing of the four cards of the required flush has so swollen your ego that you propose to perform a miracle. Hand the deck to a spectator requesting him to shuffle it thoroughly. Take it back and *strip cut* the ten of hearts to the top. With the greatest confidence announce the ten of spades and turn—the ten of hearts.

6. Without looking at the face of the card, throw it face downwards on the four tabled cards. Pretending not to understand the merriment of the spectators, you claim to have succeeded in your undertaking and that you have dealth a royal flush. This is disputed and you are told that you have a bobtail flush, four spades and one heart. Keep up the argument as long as it is amusing, then turn the five cards face upwards and show the royal flush in hearts.

The actual working of the trick is so easy that you can devote practically your whole attention to the proper presentation, with results that will be found highly gratifying.

THE MIND MIRROR

This trick, which in its original version was devised by Mr. Jack McMillen, now with a stripper deck comes close to being the perfect self-working feat with cards. Depending upon a stock of thirteen cards of one suit, a repetition was dangerous in the original version since it was necessary to cull the cards to the top prior to each performance of the trick. Use of the stripper deck makes possible a repetition of the feat without apparent culling of required cards.

EFFECT. A card is chosen by a spectator with the pack always in his own hands, following which he riffle shuffles the pack himself. Under these conditions the performer infallibly discovers the chosen card.

METHOD. Secretly, prior to performance, reverse the thirteen cards of one suit—say, hearts. When performing, hand the pack for shuffling and upon its return cull the thirteen reversed cards to the bottom by means of the *H-B Strip Suffle.*

2. Casually turn the pack so that its wide end is gripped by the left hand in the *Stripper Grip,* the wide ends of the thirteen reversed cards thus being at the inner end. Undercut about half the pack and drop the cut on top, thus placing the reversed cards in the middle. Immediately strip out the hearts in one packet with the right hand by the *Strip Cut,* run-cut a few cards of this packet to the top and with the remainder square the inner end of the back and thus sight the bottom card of the packet. Note this card, which will be your key card, and complete the run-cut of the thirteen cards onto the top of the pack, the key card falling last. Thus, you know the name of the top card, your key card.

3. To make it impossible for anyone to think that you have sighted one of the cards, proceed thus: Undercut about half the pack, drop it on top and thus place the

heart packet in the middle again. Without looking at the pack, strip the hearts from the middle with the right hand, using the *Stripper Cut,* and drop them on top. The condition of the pack now is this: The top card is your key card, below it are the twelve other hearts.

4. Hand the deck to the spectator and ask him to follow your instructions: He is to deal any small number of cards while you turn away, stop the deal whenever he likes, look at and remember the card then at the top of the remaining cards. He is to replace the dealt cards and then shuffle the pack twice, using a riffle shuffle. Nothing could appear more fair and any spectator will feel that his card has been freely chosen and that it is completely lost in the pack.

5. This done, take the pack and fan it with its face towards yourself. The chosen card will be that heart immediately to the right of the key card. The working of this ingenious principle has been explained elsewhere, notably in *Expert Card Technique* and for this reason is not explained again here. Suffice it to say that if the instructions are carried through correctly, the rest follows.

To repeat the trick, it is necessary merely to again follow the routine given above. It should not be required to counsel the reader not to perform the feat more than twice; this, after all, is enough to establish the fact that the first success was not due to luck. Since the spectator must choose a heart in each case, it would be a dense person indeed not to become suspicious if always he should choose a heart in half a dozen trials. The pack should be finely stripped.

The routine for this trick again demonstrates that there are certain effects possible with a stripper pack which cannot be obtained by any other means. In its present form, it would be hard to find a feat more mysterious and more perplexing than this exciting diablerie.

MONEY TALKS

EFFECT. The pack, after having been suffled by a spectator, is spread ribbonwise on the table. Three spectators each freely select a card by placing a coin on its back. These cards, having been noted, are replaced and the pack is again shuffled by a spectator. The coins are placed in line on the table and the pack is cut into three parts, one part going on top of each coin. The chosen cards then pass mysteriously to the bottom of each packet. Again the pack is assembled and shuffled by a spectator. The three coins are placed together and the pack is dropped onto them. Once more the coins attract the chosen cards which are found together on the bottom of the pack.

METHOD. 1. Hand the pack to a spectator to be shuffled, taking care that the overhand method is used.

2. Borrow three coins of the same value, preferably quarters or half dollars, and lay them on the table.

3. Take the pack and spread the cards in a long row face downwards, the outer ends towards the spectators, the inner ends towards yourself.

4. Hand one of the coins to a spectator and invite him to place it on the back of any card he pleases. This done, push the card forward out of the line, take it by the outer end and turn it face upwards towards yourself, that is, end for end. Name the card and ask the spectator to remember it, turn it sidewise and push it back into the line of cards.

5. Do the same thing with two other spectators.

6. Gather up the pack and hand it to be shuffled, again of course, by the overhand method.

7. Pick up the coins, jingle them in your hands, mixing them, and lay them out in a row, a few inches apart.

8. Take back the pack and use the *Stripper Jog Control* to jog the three reversed cards. Cut at and including the first reversed card and drop the packet on the middle coin; cut to the second jogged card and drop the packet on one of the two outside coins; cut to the third and drop the cut on the third coin; finally, even up the packets by placing the remaining cards on them as may be necessary. Announce that the attractive power of the money will draw each of the selected cards to its own coin.

9. Have the three cards named and turn the packets face upwards, one by one, so that a chosen card is seen at the face of each packet.

10. Turn the packets face downwards, assemble the pack and again hand it to be shuffled.

11. Take the pack back and ask a spectator to place the coins in the form of an equilateral triangle. This request generally confuses him, few remembering just what an equilateral triangle is and, as he fumbles with the coins, quietly control the three reversed cards to the bottom by the *H-B Strip Shuffle*. Then point out that by placing the coins so that they touch one another, they form a required triangle. Do this and drop the pack on the coins.

12. Announce that the combined attractive power of the coins will draw the three chosen cards to the bottom of the pack. After a few moments, turn the pack face upwards and spread the three bottom cards, showing that they have arrived. Finally remark that the trick is a good one and well worth the money. There is a general assent, so you pick up the coins and pocket them; later, of course, returning them.

This feat is one of the best that can be performed with a stripper pack, or, indeed, with any pack of cards. It has a plausible story, novelty in the manner of the selection of the cards and it requires the help of several of the audience which always enhances the effect of a card trick. It is extremely easy to perform and, therefore, allows the performer to devote practically his whole attention to the presentation. We strongly recommend the reader to add the trick to his repertoire.

PHENOMENOL

Here is a location which is calculated to cause consternation amongst the cognoscenti.

EFFECT. The pack is shuffled by a spectator, then fanned by the performer and held face outwards towards a spectator who merely touches a card and remembers it. The fan of cards is closed and the pack is squared in the fairest possible way, no sleights of any kind being used. The spectator then cuts the pack as often as he likes, yet the magician infallibly picks out the selected card.

METHOD. 1. Reverse any one card in the deck, after having noted what it is. Hand the deck to a spectator to be shuffled.

2. Take the pack back and hold it in the left hand in the *Stripper Grip*, the narrow end outwards. Jog the reversed card a fraction of an inch at the inner end. You require to have this card somewhere near the middle of the deck, therefore, if necessary, bring it to that position by a single complete cut.

3. Fan the deck between the hands and hold the fan vertically before a spectator requesting him to touch any card he pleases and to remember it. Owing to the way in which you hold the cards, the position of the jogged card is plainly visible to you but not to the spectator, and you contrive to have him touch a card somewhere near the middle, thus ensuring that it will be but a few cards distant from your key card, either above

or below it. As soon as the spectator touches a card, count from it to the key card and remember the number.

4. Close the fan and square the cards in the most meticulously open way, without making any unnecessary remarks about not executing any sleight of hand movements. Place the pack on the table and invite the spectator to cut it as often as he pleases with complete cuts.

5. When he is satisfied, take the pack with the narrow end inwards, in the *Stripper Grip,* jog the key card inwards and again fan the cards, faces outwards. Count to the number you noted on whichever side of the key card the spectator's card was, remove the card at that number and put it face downwards on the table. Have the spectator name his card, then turn it face upwards, proving that you have made an apparently impossible location.

If you prefer it, the second fanning of the pack and jogging of the key card can be dispensed with. To find the selected card, simply run over the faces until you reach the key card and from it locate the spectator's card.

CARD AND NUMBER

The familiar feat of sending a chosen card to any desired number in the pack, can not only be done more easily with a stripper pack but can be made even more surprising.

EFFECT. A card having been freely chosen, it is shuffled, into the pack by the spectator himself. He names any number and his card is found at that number from the bottom of the pack.

METHOD. Have a card freely selected from the shuffled deck and, after having it returned to the secretly reversed pack, invite the spectator to shuffle the cards again.

2. Take the pack back and by means of the *H-B Strip Shuffle,* control the chosen card to the bottom. Then shuffle by the overhand method, first taking the bottom card to the top of the pack, then repeating the shuffle by first pulling out all but the top and bottom cards and shuffling off onto these two. Thus you have the chosen card next to the bottom card.

3. Request that any number be thought of, turning the pack so that the indifferent card at the bottom can be "accidentally" noted by the onlookers. Turn the pack down and grasp it in the position for the *Stripper Glide.*

4. With the right hand draw out the bottom card and deal it face upwards on the table as you say, "You are not thinking of the first card, are you?" If the answer happens to be *Yes,* a rare occurence, have the selected card named, turn the pack upwards and show the card as being the first card from the bottom.

5. If the reply is *No,* glide the reversed card and continue, as you bring your right hand to the pack, "Are you thinking of number two?" You can tell from the spectator's reaction if you have to draw out an indifferent card or the "glided" card.

6. Supposing the answer to be *No* again, continue in exactly the same way with each number until you note that he is about to say *Yes* to the number you have called. At once draw out the "glided" card so that you have it away from the pack before he has finished his reply, and place it face downwards on the table. Have the spectator name his card and you flip it face upwards showing that you have succeeded.

This method is much more convincing than the older one in which the number is named and the cards dealt to it. Since the number is merely thought of, the spectators imagine that the card has actually been placed in that very position.

DIG WITH A SPADE

EFFECT. A card having been freely chosen, noted, replaced and the pack shuffled by the spectator himself, the magician takes the first card to hand of the spade suit and thrusts it into the pack face upwards, at random. The cards being spread on the table the chosen card is found to lie immediately below the face-up spade card. A quick, striking and incomprehensible feat.

METHOD. The usual preliminaries of having the pack shuffled, a card drawn, noted and returned to the pack, having been completed, execute a short overhand shuffle and have the cards shuffled by the spectator the same way. Then:

1. Remark that, naturally, spades are good for digging, as you take back the pack; turn it face upwards, remove the first spade you come to and place it face upwards on the table.

2. Hold the pack in the *Stripper Grip,* the narrow end innermost, and with the right thumb and second finger jog the chosen card at the inner end, a quarter of an inch or less, using the *Stripper Jog* method.

3. Turn the pack to a vertical position, the inner end being lowermost and the jogged card being hidden by the back of the hand.

4. Take the face-up spade card by one end and thrust its other end into the inner end of the pack immediately above the jogged card which acts as a guide. Keeping about half the face-up card inserted in the pack, swing the right hand around over the side of the pack to the outer end, turning the card end for end and making it protrude for about half its length from the outer end of the deck. This action must be done swiftly so that later the spectators will not be able to recall just how the card was thrust into the deck.

5. Square the pack with the right thumb and fingers, the fingers pushing the protruding card flush with the pack and the thumb doing the same thing with the jogged card at the inner end.

6. Place the pack on the table and spread it ribbonwise from right to left so that the face-up card shows up instantly amongst the face-down cards. Push the cards above it, that is, to the left of it, aside. Having the chosen card named, pick-up the face-up card and with it flick the card that was next to it face upwards. It is the chosen card.

This is another effective quick trick that can be introduced to good advantage into a card session at any time.

A BEWILDERING CHANGE

One of the fine tricks in that mammoth of magic, *Greater Magic,* is the two card transposition devised by Cardini with this name. An excellent trick in its original form, the following new routine, using a stripper deck, makes it both easier and more effective.

EFFECT. A spectator thinks of a number, counts to this number, and remembers the card in the next position. The magician takes the pack and places one card on the table. The spectator denies that this is his card. The magician then counts down to the spectator's number and there finds the card just placed on the table; when the latter is turned face upwards, it proves to be the spectator's card.

METHOD. 1. Hand the deck to the spectator. Request him to shuffle it, indicating an overhand shuffle.

2. Instruct the spectator to think of any number and deal cards, face upwards, on the table to that number; turn away so that you cannot see what is being done. Tell him then to look at the top card of those remaining in his left hand, remember the card

and leave it in that position. Have him place his right hand on his heart, urging that he concentrate upon the name of his card. With his right hand and still pressed on his heart, instruct him to place the cards held in his left hand face upwards on the pack of face-up cards.

3. Tell him to pick up and square the deck, after which you turn around and take the cards. Apparently you cannot know which card the spectator looked at; and yet, because of the subtle manner in which the cards were dealt and the pack placed upon them, all the cards originally dealt by the spectator are now reversed on the top of the deck with the chosen card directly under them.

4. Make a false cut which does not disturb the order of the cards. Hold the pack in the *Stripper Grip* and with the right hand strip the packet of reversed cards from the top by the *Stripper Cut.* Place these cards at the bottom of the pack as a continuation of the false cut.

5. Prepare for a double lift and, in making the lift, turn the two cards (the upper of which is the chosen one) end for end. Show the second card, let us say it is the seven of hearts, and turn the two cards down sidewise. You have thus reversed both cards. Immediately remove the top card, the spectator's chosen card, and place it face downwards on the table to one side. Turn to the spectator and, pointing to the card, say, "That seven of hearts (or whatever the card may be) is your card?"

6. As he denies this, cut the pack once and complete it.

7. Hold the pack in the *Stripper Grip* and immediately strip the packet of reversed cards from the middle, using the *Stripper Cut,* dropping it on top, the action appearing to be a simple cut. Ask the spectator to name the number he thought of and deal that number of cards from the top of the pack. Turn the next card face upwards and show that it is the seven of hearts, the card apparently put on the table a moment before.

8. Have the chosen card named and turn the tabled card face upwards; it is the spectator's card.

This bewildering routine illustrates the type of method which can only be used with a stripper pack and which can be performed before those familiar with the principle without arousing any suspicion.

A SUBTLE LOCATION

The principle made use of in the preceeding trick can be employed in many feats with a stripper deck. For instance it can be used to control a single chosen card in this way:

a. Hand the pack to a spectator and ask him to deal any number of cards face upwards on the table, to stop whenever he likes and to remember the card at the face of the packet on the table, that is to say, the last card dealt. Instruct him to place the cards remaining in his left hand face upwards on the packet of face-up cards, to square the pack and hand it to you. The selected card will then be the bottom card of the packet reversed on the top and you can locate it in any way you please.

A slightly different handling is this:

b. Hand the deck to the spectator. Instruct him to ruffle the outer end, remove any card from the middle and place it face upwards on the table. Tell him then to place the pack face upwards upon the tabled card and cut the pack a number of times. This done, turn to him, take the pack and the chosen card will be the lone reversed card in it.

It should be noted particularly that this ingenious principle is applicable to ordinary cards and one-way backs. In the former instance assemble the cards the end pips of which can be pointed in one direction. Carry out the instructions in *a* and the rest follows. Similarly in the case of one-way backs, either procedure can be employed and the chosen card found by glancing at the backs and noting the one card out of order.

THE STRIPPER SPELL

In this very quick and puzzling feat a card is chosen and returned to the pack in such a manner that its control by the performer seems to be impossible. The card, however, is always at his command and is immediately spelled out successfully as one card for each letter in its name is dealt from the top, the required card falling on the last letter.

It is necessary to have twelve cards reversed at the bottom of the pack, their wide ends being inwards. (*See Reversing a Packet.*) This having been done, proceed as follows.

METHOD. 1. Hold the pack with the narrow end inwards, shuffle keeping the twelve card stock at the bottom and spread the cards in a long ribbon on the table from your right to your left.

2. Request a spectator to remove any card from the middle of the line, note it and replace it at top of the spread, that is, at the extreme left, his card thus becoming the top card of the pack when, following your instructions, he gathers and squares the pack.

3. Have the pack cut and the cut completed. Apparently the card is lost in the pask, actually it is the first card under the reversed stock.

4. Again spread the cards on the table from right to left, look at the spectator and say, "This is what you did. You took any card from the pack (suit the action to the word by removing a card at the extreme right of the spread, below the stock of twelve) and you placed the card at the top of the pack, exactly as I am doing." Then gather the cards, square them and hold the pack in your hands. Continue, "Then you cut the cards." Cut the pack yourself, but whereas the spectator cut the cards while they were on the table, you cut with them in your hands, thus:

5. Hold the pack in your left hand in the *Stripper Grip*, the wide end grasped by the thumb and fingers. Take the inner end between the right thnmb and second and third fingers, as for the *Stripper Cut*, but with the right thumb pressed against the sides of the lower half of the pack. With the right hand strip the reversed stock of twelve cards and all those below it inwards and drop the packet on the top of the cards retained in the left hand.

6. Apparently you have merely repeated the spectator's procedure in selecting a card; actually you have set the pack for the successful spelling of the name of the chosen card, which is now thirteenth from the top.

The method of spelling any card in the pack by using thirteen letters is a familiar stratagem but we will detail it here briefly. Ask the name of the card and, upon learning it, arbitrarily spell it so that when the thirteenth card is dealt that card will coincide with its last letter. To do this, remember this chart:

of clubs is spelled with 7 letters.
of hearts is spelled with 8 letters.
of spades is spelled with 8 letters.
of diamonds is spelled with 10 letters.

The number of letters in the denomination is easily calculated, there being only three, four and five letter combinations possible. With the aid of a little ingenuity it is easy to spell any of the fifty-two cards by using thirteen letters: thus, queen of diamonds, having fifteen letters in its name, can be spelled by omitting the *of;* similarly, ace of clubs, having but ten, can be spelled by adding *the.*

It should be noted that this fine trick can be performed with regular cards by a lengthwise bridging of the bottom twelve cards, making their backs concave. The procedure is the same, but in illustrating what has been done, the performer cuts the cards while they are on the table, cutting into the bridge and thus bringing the twelve card stock to the top with the chosen card under it.

THE STRIPPER KEY

The use of the bottom card of the pack as a key card is so old that it was invented probably by the first conjurer to take a pack of cards in his hands. It is so old a device that it is known to the lay public but, despite this, it still is an excellent and deceptive subterfuge when artfully employed. A refinement which will deceive those who ordinarily might suspect the use of such a key card is possible with the stripper deck. Here is the procedure:

1. Reverse some fifteen cards in a packet, secretly, and note the bottom card of the group. Place this packet on the top of the pack. In presenting the feat, make an overhand shuffle which does not disturb the top sequence and, upon its completion, place the pack on the table and have a spectator cut it and complete the cut. This procedure will convince those who watch that you could not know either the top or bottom cards.

2. Spread the pack in offering it for a choice and allow any card to be taken. Should one of the reversed cards be removed, the success of the method will not be affected.

3. Square the pack and hold it in the *Stripper Grip,* the wide end being gripped by the fingers. Request the spectator to return his card and extend your left hand with the pack, at the same instant stripping out the reversed fifteen cards with the right hand by the *Stripper Cut.* This is, apparently, the fairest cut in the world and yet you know the bottom card of the packet and hence can easily locate the chosen card, it being the card directly under the key card.

Use of this and similar methods when employing a stripper pack is recommended since it will confuse those who conceivably might be watching for a stripper pack—a not improbable occurrence since the principle is fairly well known to the public generally.

THE LIGHTNING CALCULATOR

Use of a stripper pack makes possible the performance of a satndard feat of card conjuring in a manner much simpler and easier than that usually employed. The trick is this: A card is chosen and returned to the pack, which is shuffled. A spectator names a number between, say, ten and twenty. The conjurer cuts a number of cards from the top of the pack, which, when counted, prove to be the same number as that given by the spectator, and the next card is the chosen card.

METHOD. 1. Reverse seventeen cards at the top of the pack prior to performance.

Shuffle the pack by the overhand method, retaining the reversed cards at the top; then spread the cards on the table, from right to left, and have one chosen.

2. Gather the pack and, in so doing, cut it so that the stock of seventeen cards is brought to the middle. Request the spectator to note his card and replace it in the pack. As you say this, strip the seventeen reversed cards from the middle by the *Stripper Cut* and drop them upon the chosen card when it is replaced on the left hand packet. Thus, this card becomes the eighteenth card from the top.

3. Again shuffle the cards by the overhand method, retaining the eighteen cards in order and returning them to the top at the completion of the shuffle by the use of the standard injog. If the reader dislikes this practice, a simple false cut will suffice.

4. Have a number named, between one and twenty. If it is less than seventeen, subtract it from seventeen, remove cards from the top to the number thus obtained and with them fan the deck, then place them at the bottom. For example, suppose thirteen is called, remove four, fan the deck with them and put them on the bottom. If the number is nineteen, remove two cards from the bottom, fan the deck with them and drop them on the top; if eighteen, take one card from the bottom and treat it the same way. Ten and twenty are ruled out in terms of your proposition. (The preceding treatment is for those who may be disinclined to use the pass for the purpose.)

5. Cut the reversed packet from the top by means of the *Stripper Cut,* count the cards one by one showing that you have removed the exact number called for by the spectator. Then turn the next card, the chosen card.

This simple feat is surprisingly effective and it is a favorite with many card conjurers. In other versions, a narrow or short card is usually employed and the routine is not so clean-cut; in the stripper method the feat practically work itself.

LOCATING THE ACES

In many instances the stripper pack can be used to simplify standard feats which are not necessarily stripper pack tricks. An instance of this is the familiar feat in which a shuffled deck is spread and a spectator is invited to point to any four cards which are then drawn for half their length from the fan. The pack is squared and the protruding cards are withdrawn,, placed on the bottom and immediately drawn off and put on the table. The four freely selected cards prove to be the aces, thus providing an intriguing introduction to the *Braue Aces* or any other ace trick.

METHOD. 1. Prior to performance reverse the four aces. Hand the deck for an overhand shuffle, retake it, the narrow end outwards, and cull the aces to the bottom by the *H-B Strip Shuffle.*

2. Fan the cards in the left hand, holding them face downwards, and have four spectators each touch the back of one of the cards. As this is done, draw each card outwards for half its length from the fan without exposing any part of the face. Close the fan of cards and square the deck, leaving the four chosen cards still projecting; tap their ends, evening them.

3. Hold the pack as in the *Stripper Grip* but place the tip of the left forefinger against the outer ends of the four indifferent cards which protrude from the pack; strip the four aces outwards by a pressure of the left thumb and second finger at their wide ends at the bottom of the pack. The moment this reversed packet reaches the left forefinger and is, therefore, flush with the four protruding cards, grasp all eight cards and carry them away. Apparently you are simply stripping the chosen cards from the pack;

actually you strip these cards and, underneath them, the four aces. The action is so easy that is is not necessary even to look at the cards.

4. Immediately drop the pack upon the eight cards lying on the left hand and, as promptly as if this had been done inadvertently, draw the four bottom cards, the aces, from the pack with the right fingers (holding the pack as for the glide) and place them face downwards on the table.

5. Comment upon the power of coincidence being so strong as to cause four different and distinctive personalities each to choose a card of the same denomination, turn the four cards face upwards, showing the four aces.

Continue with any other feat in which the four aces are used, remembering that these cards are now in a reversed condition.

THE PRINCESS CARD TRICK: STRIPPER VERSION

The effect of this favorite feat, briefly stated, is that the magician divines the name of a card mentally selected by a spectator from amongst four freely chosen cards. METHOD. 1. Prior to performance, secretly turn the second, third and fourth cards of the pack face upwards and reverse them. Hold the pack with its narrow end inwards.

2. Spread the deck between the hands, contriving to conceal the face-up cards, and request each of four spectators to point to a card. As each card is chosen, remove it and, in placing it face upwards on the table, turn it end for end, bringing its wide end nearest to you.

3. Request one of the spectators to think of any one of the four cards and, as he concentrates on his choice, pick them up one by one and place them squarely face upwards upon the face-down deck. In doing this, take the cards from low to high: thus, A, 4, 7, K. Remember this order for you must use it later in discovering the card mentally selected by the spectator. If there should be two cards of the same denomination, remember the suit of the first card.

4. Remove the four cards and with them the three face-up cards under the top card of the pack (the action here is exactly the same as that employed in the *Braue Aces*) and hold the packet of seven cards in the right hand with the faces of the cards towards yourself. Apparently you have had four cards chosen, one of them has been mentally selected by a spectator and you have taken these four cards in your right hand.

5. Holding the packet in the right hand, thumb at the bottom end, fingers at the top end, spread the three rear cards, which are the three indifferent cards secretly added to the original packet of four, by moving them towards the left hand, the four original cards remaining in a single packet at the face of the fan, being ostensibly one card only. Take the cards, thus fanned, in the left hand.

6. It is necessary now to confuse the spectators as to the relative positions of the various cards, since their order may have been noted. To do this, remove a single card, look at it intently, glance at the spectator, and replace the card in a different part of the fan. Do this several times, finally taking the packet of four cards, *as one card,* and placing them in your right trousers pocket.

7. Turn the three remaining cards face downwards and deal them onto the deck, counting, "One, two, three." Cut the deck casually and complete the cut, thus burying the three indifferent cards.

6. It is now necessary to find out the name of the chosen card. Say. "To satisfy all those present that there is such a thing as paratelepathy, will you be good enough to name your card as a token of good faith, to assure the others that you are not, through

kindness or confederacy, accepting as your card the one which I have placed in my pocket."

9. As you say this, place your right hand into your trousers pocket and insert the tips of your first, second and third fingers between the cards. This will enable you to grip any one of them the moment it is named, by simply releasing your hold on the others. The spectator having named his card, you know instantly its place in the packet of four cards in your pocket, so you release your grip on the others and bring out the required card, without having to fumble or count to it, and hold it face downwards. Have it named again, as if you had not heard the reply to your question, then display the card to those present.

Here again the stripper pack makes the feat practically self-working and allows the performer to devote his whole attention to the proper presentation.

A CANNY COINCIDENCE

Although it is one of the easiest feats possible with a stripper pack, the following feat is, nevertheless, a quick showy demonstration of the conjurer's powers.

EFFECT. Two cards that lie next to one another are chosen by spectators A and B. The cards are noted, returned to the pack in different places and the pack is shuffled by a spectator. The two cards are ordered to come together on the bottom of the pack and are instantly shown there.

METHOD. 1. Have the pack shuffled, take it back and allow spectator A to make a free choice of any card. Turn to spectator B and invite him to take either the card that was above A's card or the one that was below it. Stress the fact that the two cards were together in the pack.

2. Having secretly reversed the deck, spread the cards and have A insert his card amongst the others allowing about half its length to protrude. Invite B to do the same with his card in a different part of the pack. Stress the fact that the two cards are well separated, close the fan of cards and slowly tap the two cards home.

3. Execute a short overhand shuffle, then hand the deck to a spectator to shuffle it to his own satisfaction.

4. Take the pack back and make the *H-B Strip Shuffle,* culling the two cards to the bottom. Undercut half the cards and execute another *Strip Shuffle,* in the course of which you sight the bottom card as has been explained. Order the two widely separated cards to come together.

5. Cut the pack using the *H-B Cut Control,* taking the two reversed cards to the bottom.

6. Request A to name his card. If it is the face card, show it and have B name his card. Slowly remove the face card and show that B's card is next. If, on the other hand, the card A names is not at the face of the pack, thank him and turn to B, show the face card and say,"This is your card, isn't it?" Upon his acquiescence, turn to A, repeat the name of his card, slowly remove the face card and reveal his.

CUT AND COME AGAIN

Here is a pleasing quick trick for intimate performance.

EFFECT. After having shuffled the deck, a spectator cuts it, notes the card cut at and replaces the cut. The cards are again mixed and again the spectator cuts, notes the card cut to and completes the cut. Once more the cards are mixed, the top card is turned face upwards and the spectator makes a final complete cut, retaining the pack in his

own hands. At command the two chosen cards pass one above and one below the face-up card.

2. Take the pack back and bring the reversed card to the bottom by the *H-B Strip Shuffle.* Place the pack face downwards on the palm of your left hand, turning it so that its narrow end is innermost and holding the hand flat with its fingers outstretched.

3. Invite a spectator to cut the pack and place the cut packet, A, face downwards on your fingers beside the remaining packet, B; then to take the top card of B, note what it is, place it on A and complete the cut.

4. Square the pack, jog the reversed card, which now lies directly above the spectator's card, and secure a break *above* it, holding the break with the left little finger tip. Grip the pack by the ends between the right thumb at the inner end and the fingers at the outer end (the thumb taking the break) and, with the left fingers, separate a small packet of cards at the bottom of the pack; carry them off sidewise with the left hand and place them on the top of the pack with the noted card immediately below it.

5. Square the pack and again place it on the palm of your left hand. Invite the spectator to "cut the cake—pardon me—the pack," and repeat exactly the same procedure as in item 3. This second card noted by him will be placed on the reversed card and the completion of the cut will result in the placing of the two noted cards in the middle of the deck with the reversed card between them.

6. Jog the reversed card, secure a break above it, and make several side cuts with the left hand as in item 4, finally cutting to the break and bringing the reversed card to the top of the pack. The situation then is this—the reversed card on the top of the pack, under it the first noted card and at the bottom of the pack the second noted card.

7. Turn the top, reversed card face upwards end for end on the deck. Invite the spectator to cut, complete the cut and take the pack himself.

8. The trick is done, all that remains is to stress the fact that the spectator made all the cuts himself, order the two chosen cards to place themselves above and below the face-up card, have the pack spread on the table and the face-up card, with the one above it and the one below it, drawn out of line. Have the spectator name his two cards and you flick them face upwards with the face-up card.

THE MYSTIC CUT

A slight prearrangement is necessary for this effective trick. Take ten cards, of any suits, whose values run from ten to ace, and arrange them in sequence so that the ten will be the top card of the packet and the ace the bottom card with the other cards in regular numerical progression. Place this packet, reversed, on the top of the remainder of the pack. To do this trick, follow this procedure:

1. Take the pack by the wide end between the right thumb and second finger and execute a regular Hindu shuffle, making the first movement by pulling off the reversed packet intact with the left thumb and fingers and continuing the shuffle in the usual way.

2. With the prearranged packet thus at the bottom, spread the pack and invite a spectator to choose a card, taking care, however, that the card is not taken from amongst the ten bottom cards.

3. The spectator having noted his card, undercut about half the pack with the right hand and have him place his card on top of the packet remaining in the left hand.

Drop the cut on top and square the pack very openly. You have thus contrived to have the chosen card just below the set-up packet.

4. Place the pack on the table and invite the spectator to cut it as often as he pleases, completing the cut each time.

5. Pick up the pack, square the ends with the right thumb and fingers, then, in squaring the sides with the left thumb and fingers, ascertain if the reversed packet is in the middle. If not, make a single cut to bring it there, square the deck and place it before the spectator.

6. Announce that you are *willing* him to do something and invite him to cut the pack into two packets as nearly equal as he can manage. If you have done your part in getting the reversed packet in the middle of the deck, he must cut into the group of ten reversed cards.

7. This done, instruct him to turn over the top card of the lower packet and place it face-up on the table. You say that you have *willed* him to cut at a card the number of whose pips will indicate the position of his chosen card from that point. Let us say that he has cut at and turned up a six spot. Instruct him to take the lower packet, deal off five cards, face downwards, and place the sixth card, also face downwards, a little apart.

8. Finally have him name his card and turn the sixth card face upwards himself—it is his card.

A moment's reflection will show that the same result must follow, no matter at which card of the ten arranged cards the cut is made.

THE PICKPOCKET

Here is a trick with simple, direct effects, plenty of action and requiring the participation of several of the spectators, all of which make for genuine entertainment. It is one of the comparatively few card tricks which are suitable for platform presentation.

EFFECT. Three spectators each draw a card, the cards are replaced and the pack is shuffled. The pack is placed in the performer's pocket and he instantly withdraws all the cards but one which proves to be one of the chosen cards. After being shuffled again, the pack is replaced in the pocket and a spectator succeeds in doing the same thing, that is to say, he pulls out all the cards except one which also proves to be a chosen card. After a final shuffle, the spectator picks the third selected card from the pack after it has been pocketed again.

METHOD. Beforehand arrange the pack as follows: Segregate all the cards of denominations from two to six, making a packet of twenty cards; all those from seven to ten, sixteen cards in all; and, finally, leave all the count cards and the aces in one packet, also sixteen cards. Assemble the pack with the low cards first, followed by the sevens to tens, and the court cards and aces at the bottom. To present the trick proceed thus:

1. Have a spectator draw a card from amongst the first twenty cards, reverse the pack and have the card replaced in that section, allowing the spectator to push the card flush and you yourself making no motion which could be construed as a sleight. Go to a second person and have him take a card from the middle section, reverse the pack and have his card replaced very openly. Finally have a third card chosen from the bottom section and treat it in the same way as the other cards. Hand the pack out to be shuffled to convince the onlookers that the three cards are lost in the pack, yet, since they are reversed, you can locate them at will and you will know by the values which card belongs to each spectator.

2. Take the pack back and, as you invite a spectator to take his place at your side, execute the *H-B Strip Shuffle* bringing the three chosen cards to the bottom. Place the pack in your right outside coat pocket and, in so doing, glimpse the bottom card. By its value you know which spectator drew it and you address him. Tell him that you are about to pick your pocket in such a way that you will pick out all the cards but his. Plunge your hand into the pocket and bring out all the cards except the bottom card. Invite the spectator to name his card and have the man beside you take the card from your pocket and show that you have succeeded.

4. Hand the pack to the volunteer assistant and have him shuffle it. Take it back, and while talking to him, asking him if he thinks he could do the trick, execute the *H-B Strip Shuffle* to bring either of the two remaining cards to the bottom, sight it as you tap the side of the pack on the table, squaring it. Palm this card in your right hand and place the pack in the same pocket again. Tell your assistant that all he has to do is to plunge his hand into your pocket, grab the pack and one of the two remaining chosen cards will elude his grasp and remain in the pocket. He seizes the pack and brings it out. Instantly thrust your right hand into the pocket and bring out the palmed card at your finger tips, face downwards. Addressing the spectator whose card you know it to be by its value, have it named, show it and congratulate your helper on his success.

5. Have him shuffle the pack, then take it and strip shuffle the last chosen card to the bottom. As you do this tell your helper he must pass one more test before qualifying as an expert pickpocket. place the pack in your pocket again, this time on its side, and twist the bottom card upright, standing it on its end. Have the third spectator, that is to say, the one whose card has not been produced, name his card. Instruct your volunteer assistant that, at the word *Three,* he is to plunge his hand into your pocket and instantly bring out that very card. "It won't give you any trouble," you say, "it will jump right into your hand. Ready? One, two, three." The helper does this and infallibly brings out the card which was on end, thus bringing an entertaining trick to a very effective climax.

HALLUCINATION

It is advisable to have as many as possible of the audience take an active part in the performance. The following trick has been devised to that end and its successful execution cannot fail to arouse the most apathetic spectators.

EFFECT. Several persons each note a card in a pack which has been shuffled freely and the pack is then handed to another person to hold. Each person then names the same card as being the one he noted but examination of the pack shows that very card is missing and the performer produces it from his own pocket.

METHOD. 1. Hand the pack to a spectator to be thoroughly shuffled.

2. It is now necessary to have a small number chosen. It is not entirely satisfactory to have a spectator name a number since in surprising effects like this one, there are always many who will explain the trick by maintaining that the number was determined beforehand and named at your request. Arriving at a number by the throwing of dice is also open to objection, the use of loaded dice being well known as a possibility. Perhaps the best plan in this case is to ask the person who has shuffled the cards to square the deck, cut off a small packet and hand it to his neighbor to count the number of cards it contains. We will suppose that this has been done and that the number thus arrived at is nine. Leave these cards in the hands of the person who counted them for possible verification.

3. Take the remainder of the pack, then ask a spectator to hold his left hand palm upwards and you slowly count off eight cards onto it. Take the cards by the outer right corners, turning them face upwards under pretext of showing how well mixed the cards are, but really in order to turn the eight cards end for end. Turn them down sidewise and place them at the bottom of the pack.

4. Invite the spectator to lift the outer right corner of the top card, originally the ninth card, note what it is in such a way that no one else can see it, then cut the pack and square the cards.

5. Jog the reversed packet, now somewhere in the middle and take a break *above* its top card with the left little finger. Grip the pack by the ends between the right thumb and fingers, retaining the break with the thumb, separate a small packet of cards at the bottom with the left fingers, carry it away sidewise with the left hand and place it on the top of the pack. Repeat this move several times, finally taking all the cards below the break and putting them on the top. The card noted by the first spectator is thus returned to its original position, ninth from the top.

6. Go to a second spectator, a little apart from the first, and repeat the operation, but, this time, simply count off the first eight cards into your right hand very openly and place them on the bottom. Invite this person to peek at the top card, note it and cut it to the middle. Make the jog and repeat the side cuts as in item 5, again placing the original ninth card in that same position.

7. Repeat the whole maneuver with a third and fourth spectator, but invite the fourth person to take the top card in his hand and note it carefully. As he does this, quietly turn, end for end, the eight cards just counted off into your right hand, place them on the bottom and reverse the pack for the return of the spectator's card. Let him push it into the middle of the deck, take the deck and shuffle it himself.

8. Take the pack back, turn it face upwards and, under pretext of showing how thoroughly mixed the cards are, execute the *H-B Strip Shuffle* taking the reversed card to the top, turn the pack face downwards and palm the reversed card. Do this as you announce seriously that you are about to make the four chosen cards, so well distributed throughout the pack, appear instantaneously on the top. Hand the pack to a fifth person and have him lift off the four top cards and show them to prove that the selected cards are not already in that position; meantime casually thrust *both* hands into your trousers pockets and leave the palmed card in the right hand pocket.

9. In order to bring about this peculiar phenomenon you explain that it is necessary for the four spectators who chose cards to call the names of their cards loudly at the very same moment. "Now, gentlemen," you say, "when I call *Three* call out the names of your cards as loudly as you can. The card whose name is called the loudest will become the topmost card and the others in due order. Ready? One, two, three." All four spectators call the name of the same card, say the seven of clubs, to your pretended consternation. Argue with them that it was impossible for all of them to have chosen the same card but they maintain they have made no mistake, so you have the fifth spectator examine the pack and he reports the seven of clubs is missing.

10. You continue, "You see, gentlemen, the whole thing has been a pure hallucination on your part. You could not possibly have seen the seven of clubs, for knowing that that is a very unlucky card, I put it in my pocket before we began the experiment." Take the seven of clubs from your pocket and show it.

THE BRAUE ACES

Here is a genuine novelty—something new in four ace tricks, a method which works itself without difficult sleights or misdirective devices. A trial will convince the reader that this is one of the cleverest of all four ace tricks.

EFFECT. The four aces, widely separated, gather in one pile.

METHOD. Prior to performance, secretly turn the second and third cards of the pack face upwards and reverse them, so that their wide ends are at the narrow end of the pack. These two cards are concealed beneath the top card, which is face downwards in normal condition.

2. Hold the deck with its narrow end innermost, turn it face upwards by turning it sidewise. Run through the cards and, as you come to each ace, place it face downwards on the table, turning it end for end in so doing; square the pack and turn it face downwards, again turning it sidewise, keeping its narrow end innermost.

3. Turn the four aces face upwards on the table by turning them sidewise, retaining their reversed position. Hold the pack in the left hand in the *Stripper Grip,* pick up one of the aces and put face upwards on the pack, calling attention to its suit. Repeat the action with the other three aces.

4. Remove the four face-up aces, and with them the two face-up cards below the top face-down card, by gripping them at the sides near the inner end between the right thumb and second finger, exactly as in the *Stripper Cut.* Because the wide ends of the four aces and the two face-up indifferent cards are at the narrow ends of all the remaining cards of the pack, only these six cards will be stripped away, the face-down card remaining on the top of the pack.

Apparently you have removed only the four face-up aces; actually you have included two face-up cards beneath them in the action. Turn the six cards face downwards and drop them on the pack, thus placing indifferent cards at the first and second positions. These actions may be extremely deliberate, since there is not the slightest chance of detection.

5. Deal the top card onto the table on your left. In so doing, grasp it between the right thumb and first finger at the outer right corner and with the second finger push its right edge so that its former inner end is turned outwards, a familiar method of dealing in which cards are *skimmed* across a table; in this case the action serves to turn the indifferent card, thus dealt, end for end. Repeat the procedure with the next card, dealing it to the right of the first card. In dealing the third card, an ace, place it upon the table without reversing it, and treat the fourth card, also an ace, similarly. The position then is this:

A	B	C	D
Any card.	Any card.	Ace.	Ace.

6. Hold the pack in the left hand in the *Stripper Grip* and, using the *Stripper Cut,* strip off the two reversed cards at the top as one card, holding them at the sides near the inner corners between the right thumb and second fingers. Push off the top card of the deck with the left thumb and take it at the face of the two aces by pressing it upwards with the tips of the left second and first fingers, allowing a flash of this indifferent card. Similarly push off a second card and add it to the right hand packet. Drop these four cards, supposedly three, on the ace at D.

7. Follow the same procedure with the cards at C, B, and A, but dealing three cards only upon each of them. The condition then is this: Three indifferent cards repose upon the ace at C; of the four cards upon the ace at D, the third and fourth from the top are indifferent cards; while at both A and B are four indifferent cards.

8. Cut about three-quarters of the pack, drop the packet on A, pick up both together by sliding the cards towards you off the table and drop all on the remainder of the pack in your left hand. Cut again, taking about half the cards, drop the packet on B, pick up both and add them to the cards in your left hand in the same way. Cut the pack once more, taking a small packet from the top and drop it on C. Pick up this combined packet by the ends between your thumb and fingers, turn it upwards and tap its lower side on the table, as if merely to square the cards but so giving a flash of the bottom card, an ace. Drop the packet on top of the pack.

9. Pick up the last packet and place it face upwards on the deck, letting it overlap at the inner end for about half its length. Turn the packet face downwards and push it squarely onto the deck, which you still hold in the *Stripper Grip;* immediately strip out the reversed cards at the top, the four aces, the indifferent cards being retained on the top of the pack by the left thumb and fingers, remarking, "But I won't use the pack. Will you place your hand on it?" The spectator does so. Continue, "I have one ace, (show ace at the bottom of your packet) you have three. I merely pass my cards over your hand so (spreading them fanwise face downwards) and the aces instantly come to me, while the other three cards pass back into the pack." Turn the four aces face upwards. Examination of the pack by the spectator proves that the three aces have left it.

It should be noted that the actions in paragraphs 1 to 5 inclusive can be adapted to any of the ordinary four ace tricks, the novelty of this brilliant method being the indetectable placement of the two indifferent cards above the aces. Note also that at the conclusion of the feat the pack is in regular order, only the four aces being reversed and this can be corrected in replacing them on the top of the pack, thus preparing it for any future stripper tricks.